

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 AGR-20 FEAE-00 L-03 SWF-02 AID-20

TRSE-00 IO-14 XMB-07 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 DRC-01 /117 W

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O R 181805Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 256

INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ABIDJAN 7545

FOR LOUGHRAN AF/W FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EFIN, EGEN, IV

SUBJECT: LANG AFRIQUE--DISCUSSION WITH SODESUCRE

REF A. ABIDJAN 7502; B. ABIDJAN 7420

1. IN ABSENCE AT FERKE OF KIGBAFORY, DIRECTOR OF SODESUCRE, COMMERCIAL ATTACHE

AND I MET THIS MORNING WITH AMICHIA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF SODESUCRE, TO FOLLOW UP ON MY MEETING WITH MINPLAN DIAWARA (REFTEL A) AND LAST WEEK'S ISC/LANG VISITORS (REFTEL B). WE TOLD HIM THAT, WHILE WE IN NO WAY REPRESENTED LANG, WE WERE AS CONCERNED AS LANG AND GOIC THAT SUGAR REFINERY BE FINISHED ON TIME AND WE UNDERSTOOD THAT LANG'S NEED FOR ONE MILLION DOLLARS AT THIS TIME WAS CRITICAL TO MEETING CURRENT SUPPLIER BILLS AND KEEPING CONSTRUCTION MOVING.

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2. AMICHIA, WHO HAD PARTICIPATED IN LAST WEEK'S MEETING WITH

ISC/LANG REPS, SAID THERE WAS NO PROBLEM ABOUT THE 565,000 PAYMENT AGAINST BILLS ALRXDY SUBMITTED BY LANG TO SODESUCRE, BUT THAT SODESUCRE WAS RELUCTANT TO PAY OUT ANY OF THE RETENTION GUARANTY FUNDS (\$1,700,000) UNTIL THE PROJECT IS COMPLETED. WE COUNTERED THAT WE UNDERSTOOD MINFIN BEDIE AND MINPLAN DIAWARA HAD AGREED LAST WEEK TO RELEASE PART OF THE RETENTION FUNDS NOW AND THE REST IN THE COMING MONTHS, OR IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR LANG TO CONTINUE TO MOVE AHEAD ON THE PROJECT.

3. AMICHIA SAID HE WAS GOING TO FERKE SEPTEMBER 19, WHERE HE WOULD CONSULT FURTHER WITH KIGBAFORI AND RETURN ABIDJAN NIGHT SEPTEMBER 20. HE PLANS SEE HOVINE, DIRECTOR OF CAISSE AUTONOME D'AMORTISSEMENT, ON SEPTEMBER 21 TO ADVISE HOVINE ON AMOUNT OF PAYMENT WHICH SODESUCRE CURRENTLY WILLING APPROVE FOR LANG. HE HOPES HOVINE CAN CARRY CHECK FOR THAT AMOUNT TO WASHINGTON, SINCE HOVINE LEAVES ON SEPTEMBER 22 IN PREPARATION FOR IBRD/IMF MEETING, WHERE HE IS DELEGATION MEMBER.

4. AMICHIA SAID HE THOUGHT THE \$565,000 COULD BE TRANSFERRED NOW AND PROMISED TO DISCUSS WITH KIGBAFORI THE BALANCE REQUIRED TO BRING THIS PAYMENT TO ONE MILLION DOLLARS.

5. I AM TO SEE AMICHIA AGAIN ON SATURDAY FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH HOVINE. I SHALL ADVISE IMMEDIATELY.

6. PLEASE PASS ABOVE TO DAVID MORSE.

7. COMMENT: ONE REMARK OF AMICHIA'S STRENGTHENS OUR THESIS THAT KIGBAFORI RESENTED BEING BY-PASSED (RDTel A, PARA 4). HE SAID: "THE MINISTERS DON'T FOLLOW ALL THE DETAILS OF SUCH A PROJECT," AND THEREFORE CANNOT KNOW PRECISELY WHAT IS TO BE DONE. IT ALSO SHOWS THAT MEETING ISC/LANG REPS HAD WITH KIGBAFORI LAST WEEK (THE ONE WE WERE UNABLE TO COVER) WAS LESS THAN THOROUGH. TO TOP IT, WE FOUND OUT THAT LANG'S LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE RETURNED TO USA WITH STEIN AND HOFKER, LEAVING NO ONE HERE WHO HAD HEARD THE DISCUSSIONS AT ALL THEIR SESSIONS WITH GOIC AND SODESUCRE. LOCAL REP IS REPORTEDLY RETURNING TONIGHT. IF SO, WE SHALL BE IN TOUCH WITH HIM TO MORROW.

SMITH

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